

Washington, DC - U.S. Rep. Mark Kirk (R-Ill.) today introduced legislation that would strip congressional pensions from any Member of Congress convicted of a felony.

Upon enactment, the Congressional Integrity Act of 2005 would deny a congressional pension to any Member convicted on final appeal for a range of crimes relating to their public duties including bribery, illegal compensation, fraud, solicitation and tax evasion.

“Lawmakers should be held to the highest standards of the law,” said Kirk. “The integrity of the Congress should never be called into question. This legislation will ensure members who are convicted of a felony will lose their government pension.”

Similar legislation overwhelmingly passed the House of Representatives in 1996 by a vote of 391-32. Nearly all Republicans and most Democrats supported that measure, including Speaker Hastert, former Majority Leader Tom DeLay and Minority Leader Nancy Pelosi. The bill did not become law when the Senate failed to act.

Kirk highlighted the broad coalition inside the Republican Party that united behind his new ethics legislation. Kirk, a leader of the Republican moderates, is joined by 12 original co-sponsors including Rep. Mike Pence (R-IN), leader of the conservative Republican Study Coalition, Rep. John Shadegg (R-AZ), chair of the Republican Policy Committee, and Rep. Fred Upton (R-MI), board member of the Republican Main Street Partnership.

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